



Creating healthy babies - An online proactive preconception preparation course; an innovative COVID safe approach to support fertility couples

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Abstract

I believe that every new life deserves the best start possible. Preconception Health Care (PCHC) involves optimising the health of the parents in every way to maximise the health of their future baby. This abstract describes the pros and cons of an online learning course to empower and educate prospective parents through this process, particularly during the restrictions imposed by COVID-19.

It is also a useful resource for busy health professionals to recommend for their clients to ensure the 'basics' are covered prior to targeted interventions in fertility challenges such as specific herbal support, acupuncture or referral for assisted reproduction support.

PCHC ideally begins a at least several months prior to conception and looks at:

Understanding and improving the woman's menstrual cycle and understanding her fertility

Optimising weight and healthful eating;

Undergoing thorough testing to identify any nutritional deficiencies (such as iron, zinc, B12, iodine or Vitamin D), identifying and treating any infections, ensuring immunity to Rubella, assessing vital organ function and checking for inflammation

Appropriate supplementation, incorporating extra methylating nutrients if there are genetic variants in folate, B12 or B6 metabolism

Stress management and lifestyle considerations

Minimising exposure to social and environmental toxins

Optimising male fertility and conception timing

"Creating Healthy Babies - Proactive Preconception Preparation" provides an effective platform to support both couples and health professionals supporting them.

Many women start trying to conceive by ceasing hormonal contraception and 'hope for the best' without understanding their fertile cycles. They are most likely aware that smoking and alcohol are contraindicated, but are unaware of the impact of being overweight, endocrine disruptors in their food and personal care products, the important nutrients required in the lead up to conceiving a child and the importance of the male's role in the equation. The female partner may have been to their GP in readiness, and other than checking for STDs, Rubella status and blood group, may be told 'Don't smoke, eat a healthy diet and good luck' without any specific recommendations. Or say "Just start trying and contact me if you have any troubles' not understanding the importance of preconception preparation. Or if the couple have been trying for some time, immediate referral to an IVF specialist may occur.

Biography

Doreen has been passionate about educating and assisting her client optimises their health and fertility for over 30 years. After completing her Medical Science Degree in 1982, and working in various Melbourne laboratories, she travelled to the UK to gain further medical experience. Later, while working in Hematology at the Royal Children's Hospital she studied Naturopathy, graduating from the 4-year long course in 1989. She completed a certificate in Natural Fertility Management in 2002 and has been focusing on Natural Fertility support since then.



10th International Conference on Traditional Medicine and Acupuncture
November 9-10, 2020

Citation: Doreen, Creating healthy babies - An online proactive preconception preparation course; an innovative covid safe approach to support fertility couples, Traditional Medicine 2020, 10th International Conference on Traditional Medicine and Acupuncture, November 9-10, 2020, 06